WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY - Founded December 17, 1857

MARCH 1988

# WASHTENAW IMPRESSIONS

## HILL AUDITORIUM, 'CARNEGIE HALL OF MIDWEST,' 75 YEARS OLD THIS YEAR AND STILL GOING STRONG

UM's Hill Auditorium, which has been called a "sort of Carnegie Hall for the whole midwest" is 75 years old this year.

The 1913 May Festival was held there before its dedication on June 25 that year. Since then many of the world's best musicians have performed there at May Festivals and other concerts.

It sits on the site of a former octogon house which had been built on the site of a log cabin of Michigan's first Supreme Court justice, William Asa Fletcher, according to Kent Sagendorph in *Michigan, The Story of the University,* 1948.

As early as 1894 Professor Albert Stanley and two other members of the University Musical Society thought University Hall was inadequate and started trying to interest possible donors in a new hall according to the *University of Michigan, An Encyclopedic Survey.*

But the donor who made it possible said nary a word about it until his will was made public in 1910, giving $200,000 for such a building, He was Regent Arthur Hill of Saginaw who died in 1909, the year Harry B. Hutchins became UM president.

Hill graduated from the UM in 1865 in civil engineering and studied law there before returning to Saginaw to enter upon a business career in lumbering, manufacturing and shipping "which rapidly grew to large proportions" according to Burke A. Hinsdale's *History of the University of Mighigan,* 1906.

The colorful writer Sagendorph characterizes Hill as "the dour old millionaire...the richest man in Saginaw, a railroad tycoon who was ominously silent most of the time."

However, as a regent, Hill approved buying the late Professor Alexander Winchell's octagonal house when they had the opportunity. He also personally bought and presented Saginaw Forest on West Liberty Road to the University for use in forestry field studies, a big boost toward establishing the School of Natural Resources.

Hill asked the UM to name the forest farm in honor of his hometown where he was a three-term mayor.

Hill Auditorium was designed by Architect Albert Kahn's firm with John T. N. Hoyt (UM '91) chief engineer. A great deal of effort went into planning proper acoustics for the 4,300 seat hall. (After 1949 renovation, there were 4,200 seats.)

The building cost $282,000. With equipment, the total was $347,600.

The Frieze Memorial Organ was moved from University Hall in 1913 and a new front installed. In 1928 this organ was mostly replaced by a new instrument but the name was retained, the *Survey* says.

Of the Octagon house style, Sagendorph says it was the fashion from 1840-1850. He attributes the shape to the use of the first central heating plants in the basement.

Judge Fletcher's log cabin, built in 1833, had burned and was in ruins in 1840, Sagendorph writes, so the octagon house was built after 1840.

It was rented in 1875-76 by Alpha Delta Phi for a fraternity house.

## DUES PAID FOR 1988? CHECK ADDRESS LABEL

Members, please check your address label. If it does not list a year or say "life member" it means your dues are not yet paid.

We don't want to lose you but we can't afford to continue sending you *The Impressions*, unless dues are paid by March 31. See "How To Join" article. Questions? Call 663-2379.

## PROFESSOR DANDEKAR PLANS SLIDE SHOW ON MICHIGAN BARNS

Barns are a familiar part of the Michigan landscape but to a scholar from India they are magnificent structures, unique to the western world. If present trends continue, they may be a rare sight to all of us.

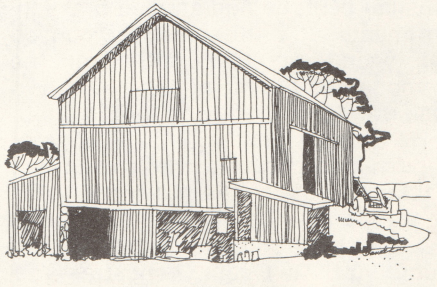
Professor Hemalata Dandekar of the University of Michigan College of Architecture and Urban Planning will present a slide show, "The Michigan Farm and Its Buildings," at 2 p.m. Sunday, March 20, at the Washtenaw County Historical Society meeting at Bentley Library.

She will show pictures of barns in Washtenaw County and elsewhere in Michigan, both typical and unusual. Her study, an on-going project, is partly funded by the Michigan Council for the Humanities.

Professor Dandekar graduated from the University of Bombay and earned a UM master's degree. She practiced architecture in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Los Angeles, California, and earned a Ph. D. there at UCLA.

She taught a year at Massachusetts Institute of Technology before returning to the UM in 1981 where she is an associate professor.

Bentley Library is at 1150 Beal on the UM North Campus. There is free parking by the building and across the street on Sundays.



## MARWIL APRIL SPEAKER

Jonathan L. Marwil, author of *A History of Ann Arbor,* 1987, wll speak at the WCHS meeting at 2 p.m. Sunday, April 17, at the Bentley Library.

## AND THE MELODY LINGERS ON

# TROMBONIST PLAYED IN 26 MAY FESTIVALS

**By Ramon R. Hernandez**

*(Hernandez, director of the Ann Arbor Public Library, asked the audience to pretend it was April 30, 1986, when he spoke.)*

Tonight opens the 93rd annual May Festival, a four-night series of concerts with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, featuring some of the finest music ever composed.

For those of you who know what this annual event is musically, I need not elaborate on its significance, except to give tremendous credit to Gail Rector (Ken Fischer now) and his University Musical Society staff for making this event such a success year after year, and also a special "hats-off" to Donald Bryant for preparing the Festival Chorus, which will open this year's program tonight with the singing of the magnificent "Requiem" by Giuseppe Verdi.

Much has been said about the long tenure of the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra under the late Eugene Ormandy, which performed here for almost 50 years, ending in 1984.

But today, I would like to offer a different perspective on the May Festival, taking you back to its beginnings and up through the 1920's.

We experience history in the arenas of world, local and personal events, and , for my purposes today, I want to tell the story through the eyes of one man – an obscure tombone player.

It was January 1, 1893, and for 24 hours Gustav Stange had been free. He had just finished his four years of compulsory military service in the German armed forces, spending most of his tour of duty as a musician in a variety of military bands and orchestras.

A native of Koenigsberg, the ancient capital of East Prussia, and today, Kaliningrad, a military city in the Soviet Union, Stange was one of five children, four boys and a girl. He was the son of a master stone cutter.

The only member of the family with a musical bent, he had studied brass instruments at a Koenigsberg conservatory and eventually settled on the trombone as his main instrument. His task now, at age 23, was to find a job.

He was to play with a number of bands and orchestras in north and central Europe, but by the end of the 1890s he was to have established himself as a competent trombone player with the Hamburg State Opera Orchestra.

A member of the Hamburg orchestra was an older man named Ferdinand Weidig. Weidig had a son Adolf, who had emigrated to America. Adolf, whom the older Weidig had visited during the 1893 World's Fair, or Columbian Exposition as it was known, was a composer, violin teacher, and now a member of a new struggling symphony orchestra in Chicago, Illinois.

**The obscure German trombonist through whose eyes the story of the Ann Arbor May Festival was told at the February meeting was Gustav Stange, far right, above. He played in 26 festivals, 1904-1929.**

Weidig also had a daughter, Louise, whom Stange courted and married.

By the turn of the century, big cities in America were waking up culturally and turning to Europe for artistic talent, and in the field of music, especially Germanv.

Thus, in the summer of 1902, under contract to play the 1902-03 season with the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, Stange set sail for America, with his wife, daughter, 1½, and infant son.

In Ann Arbor, Albert A. Stanley had come to teach courses in the Literary Department of the University of Michigan in the theory of music and related subjects in 1888. He also was to assume leadership of the University Musical Society.

For about five years, Stanley had gotten the Boston Symphony Orchestra to come to Ann Arbor to perform. But by the end of 1893, the orchestra notified Stanley that it could no longer afford to tour and canceled its 1894 concert here.

However, Stanley was able to engage the Boston Festival Orchestra of 50 members, a more than adequate size for University Hall.

But there was a hitch. In order to meet the orchestra's expenses, including a whoppng $2,000 for eight soloists, Stanley figured that there had to be a minimum of three concerts.

A more-than-one-day arrangement was made for the Ann Arbor appearance. The idea of calling this arrangement a festival hit the minds of several people. Thus, in 1894, out of necessity, the May Festival was created.

Well, now you got it. Obviously, if you have committed a bundle of money, you must sell it. And sell it they did.

The sheer number of press clippings from newspapers around Michigan and beyond buried in Musical Society archives testifies to the media blitz. Special trains were arranged. The Musical Society advised persons to check with its offices on Maynard Street for overnight accommodations.

*The Michigan Daily* called its readers' attention to the potential conflict between the festival and some sporting events, chastising "those female co-eds who won't attend a baseball game or the May Festival unless some male student invites them."

*The Daily* also admonished the athletic authorities "for scheduling the freshmen-sophmore track and field meet on the same afternoon as a May Festival concert."

All that did not deter a great attendance. On May 18, 1894, a Friday evening, the Boston Festival Orchestra gave a full program of orchestral music, opening with Beethoven's "Leonore No. 3" overture.

There was a matinee on Saturday afternoon, the 19th, and on Saturday evening, under the direction of Stanley himself, the Festival Chorus, with guest soloists, performed the work we will hear tonight, the beautiful "Requiem" by Verdi.

In a review of that performance, the *Chicago Herald* stated, "The soloists were superb. The chorus under the leadership of Stanley and in excellent manner especially rendered in a brilliant way, 'The Sanctus' (a double chorus fugue)."

There were some problems at the first festival, in spite of its smashing success. Hundreds jammed special trains, but most of them had neglected to buy tickets to the concerts ahead of time, and upon arriving all the tickets were sold out.

As a result, they found themselves jamming the corridors and passageways in University Hall. Although the concert was superb, the people emerged tired and hungry from standing in the hallways, and anxious to get home. But their troubles did not end there.

**When those who attended the first night flocked back to the New York Central Station, today the Gandy Dancer, they found that their trains had been sent on to Detroit and no one had remembered to have them sent back. They did not arrive back in Ann Arbor until 3 a.m.**

An article in the May 23, 1894, *Ann Arbor Democrat*, said "The officers of the Choral Union who put on the May Festival last week are still speaking to each other."

Following his second season with the Philadelphia Symphony, our German-born trombonist Gustav Stange resigned in the spring of 1904, having been lured away by the legendary Theodore Thomas to play first chair trombone in his symphony orchestra in Chicago.

Although Thomas died suddenly in January, 1905, and was succeeded by Fredrick Stock, the fine violinist from Cologne, Germany, our trombonist Stange was to remain with what became the Chicago Symphony until his retirement in 1929—after 25 years of service.

As his family moved to Chicago in the summer of 1904, Stange picked up a summer job playing with—of all groups—the Boston Festival Orchestra, just in time to come to Ann Arbor to play in the 11th annual May Festival, his first of what were to be 26 consecutive Festivals.

Sports was making headlines on the national scene at this time. In Chicago it was Tinker-to-Evers-to-Chance, (famous baseball double-play combo) and the world champion Chicago Cubs.

But of serious consequence was the national furor over college football. It was to require the close attention of UM President James B. Angell after the 1905 season.

All of us are aware of the exploits of Fielding Yost and the legendary 1901 season that led to a UM 49-0 thrashing of Stanford in the first Tournament of Roses. But in 1905, nationwide, 18 college players had died of football-related injuries. President Theodore Roosevelt threatened to abolish the sport.

UM's President Angell called a meeting of the Western Conference faculty in Chicago to take control of athletics. The Universities of Chicago and Wisconsin even suggested abolishing football for two years to cool the fever.

Eight restrictions on participation were adopted. Among them were the following:

1. No student could play until he had been in residence a year (trying to halt the recruitment of professionals and luring star players from other colleges);

2. Players must be doing satisfactory academic work in a full course of studies;

3. No more than five intercollegiate games should be scheduled each season;

4. No coaching except by regularly appointed staff, whose salaries should not be more than other faculty members of the same rank!

In part, the furor raised on campus in Ann Arbor over new rules governing football and the greater issues of who controls athletics on a college campus, led to a series of events that contributed to the Western Conference dropping the UM from the conference in January 1908.

For ten years, Michigan stubbornly remained outside the conference but finally a change in its authority of control of athletics led to its readmittance in November 1917.

The University was growing, and by the turn of the century, it was one of the largest in the country, numbering about 3,500 students.

Charles A. Sink arrived at the University in 1904 to begin a distinguished career spanning six decades. Although originally holding the title of secretary for the University Musical Society, it fell to Sink to handle the wealth of details and diplomacy required in putting forth the extensive year-around UMS program.

One of the first duties befalling him was handling the announcement by the Boston Festival Orchestra that, after 11 seasons of May Festivals, it could no longer afford to tour. The Society then contacted the Theodore Thomas Orchestra of Chicago, and it expressed its willingness to play at the 1905 festival.

**When one surveys the names of the Chicago orchestra's players on the May Festival Programs of 1905-06-07, and for many years beyond, three out of four were German.**

Thus, it is no wonder that the musicians felt so very much at home in Ann Arbor—both with its many ethnic Germans in the community and with the strong course work in German language, literature and research at the University. As a matter of fact, much of the University was modeled after the German university system.

Although it was natural for Stange and fellow German musicians to speak their native tongue at home, Stange's own decision to become Americanized was irrevocable. He almost immediately applied for citizenship.

By 1908, Stange, his wife, and young daughter and son became American citizens. Although he corresponded regularly with his relatives back home in East Prussia, he never returned to Germany, even to visit.

Ann Arbor was a bit slow in warming up to the new orchestra. Following the 1906 festival, which was down in revenue but not all that bad in attendance, there was a lot of fingerpointing in Ann Arbor.

*The Ann Arbor News* reported:

> "A resounding success, but financially a failure. The burden of the deficit laid with the people of Ann Arbor themselves. The businessmen of the city, it is said, have not supported the Festival generously this year. The festival will not meet expenses by any means, and while a festival for next year is assured, a new plan will be adopted, introducing concerts of a more popular nature."

But the Theodore Thomas Orchestra was back next year and the program was not watered-down with a Sousa-type program. The 1907 festival was a great financial success, with much business support in terms of advertising, and the orchestra played to great reviews.

Ann Arbor, historically, it seems, always has something to complain about. The 1907 festival featured a commentary on festival conduct, bringing to mind the articles in our local press in 1985 about all the coughing.

*The Ann Arbor Argus* on May 7, 1907, wrote:

> "All should come early so that the ushers may seat the audience before the concert is to begin. All

concerts need to begin at the hour announced so that those who desire may leave on the late trains. The placing of chairs in the aisles of the carrying of chairs of any description is forbidden."

"The ladies are respectfully requested to remove their hats. Only two other things need to be added: do not take children who are too young to appreciaate the concerts and who annoy others, and if you cannot appreciate the concerts enough to stop talking yourself, then go out on the campus to talk instead of the hall."

Three other interesting gems of note in the 1907 Festival:

**After the first night, renowned baritone soloist Giuseppe Campanari, along with the Thomas Orchestra's harpist and librarian, were found as patrons of the Bijou, a cheap downtown vaudeville theater, singing and drinking along with the local customers and watching a moving picture on the Bijou's large screen.**

On May 11,1907, the *Detroit News* reported that for the first time in Festival history (and as far as we know the last time), the audience arrived in the midst of a snow storm.

But, perhaps, most interesting was the May 9 concert, when the Bell Phone Company put on a "Televent" as an experiment. With two boxes (we would call a telephone version of a microphone) suspended above Conductor Stock's head, the concert was sent along the telephone lines to persons with phones in Detroit.

Although the experiment was described as somewhat successful it was not repeated in subsequent years.

With the passing of the 1907 season, two things seemed to emerge: the permanence of the Festival itself, and the use of the Theodore Thomas Orchestra for many years to come.

First chair trombonist, Gustav Stange, was asked "What were those tours like?" He would always return home with a silver spoon from each of the cities he visited to add to his wife's collection.

He enjoyed going east, such as Ann Arbor, because the players were more on their own. They usually stayed in hotels and they had free time.

When they would go west—Iowa, Nebraska and the like—they usually stayed in private homes under a variety of conditions.

One incident Stange reported, that perhaps occurred on he way to Ann Arbor, was the orchestra's visit to the Kellogg Company in Battle Creek, one of the sightseeing advantages of touring.

Up to that point, his family used to eat corn flakes regularly. However, when he saw that the flakes were simply dumped on a warehouse floor and shoveled into boxes, he expressed concern over sanitation, and upon his return home, he banned all cold cereal from the family's table.

Another question asked was "What do all you orchestra players talk about when the conductor and soloists are taking their bows?"

He answered, "Usually it was 'did anyone get any news from home today?' or 'whose room will the poker game be held in tonight when we get back to the hotel?' "

If one year stands out above the rest in the early days of the Festival, it would be 1913. Through the gift of Arthur Hill and some matching university funds, an auditorium, billed as one of the best in the country, was built and opened in time for the 1913 May Festival.

With the moving into Hill Auditorium, the Festival expanded to four days, including a children's chorus from the Ann Arbor Public Schools. The orchestra expanded to about 80 members, taking advantage of the larger hall.

At the same time, national and international events were capturing the attention of Ann Arborites.

**The year before, in 1912, the United States—brace your self—intervened militarily in Nicaragua, landing Marines there, when Secretary of State Knox could not get the Senate to ratify a treaty providing loans from American bankers.**

Knox negotiated another treaty with Nicaragua giving the United States the right of way for a canal, a naval base and a long-term lease on some offshore islands.

Again, the Senate refused to ratify the treaty, but in 1916, the Wilson adminstration secured ratification of a similar treaty.

With the split in the Republican Party, between the regulars and Bull Moose, Democrat Woodrow Wilson, who was once considered for the post of UM President, was elected President of the United States. He took office two months before the 1913 May Festival.

On the sports scene, Ty Cobb refused to sign a contract with the Detroit Tigers. They only offered $10,000, Cobb's 1912 salary. Cobb wanted $15,000.

On April 19, Cobb was suspended for not reporting. On April 22, an Illinois congressman called for an investigation of professional baseball, and finally on April 25, the same day that the Theodore Thomas Orchestra changed its name to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Ty Cobb signed for a reported $10,500 or $11,000.

But back to the May Festival. Stanley and Sink made the transition to the big, beautiful and highly acclaimed new Hill Auditorium without a hitch. With 4,300 seats, attendance nearly doubled, and on opening night, the concert featured the ever-popular Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony".

On the second night, again under the direction of Stanley, and in honor of the 100th anniversary of the composer's birth, the Festival Chorus sang "Requiem" by Verdi.

The review read: "The Requiem was sung with splendid effect last evening. The concert is a triumph for the Festival Chorus. Although it rained steadily throughout the evening, Hill Auditorium was filled almost to overflowing."

The 1913 Festival was not without its interesting sidelights, not the least of which was an inside look into the private life of one of the soloists, Maria Rappold.

The local paper reported that Mrs. Rappold was "surprised and distressed when told this morning, May 16, that her husband, Dr. Julius Rappold, had been giving some interviews in New York City regarding her fight for a divorce."

"She would not admit this when contacted in her hotel this morning. She said, 'This is terrible. Why can't the papers leave such private matters alone? I refuse to make any statement.'

"Dr. Rappold declared that he would prevent his wife from getting a divorce 'for her on good.'

"Mrs. Rappold said sometime ago 'he does not love me or our daughter. I married him when I was too young to know what I was doing. He is as cold as science itself.'

"Dr. Rappold said at the time, 'A man who is married to a professional woman is really not married at all. Marrying a genius is like going to war. Conjugal happiness seldom can endure when the wife is a genius and her husband is not.' "

In 1914, war broke out in Europe and almost immediately its consequences came home to Chicago and Ann Arbor. In April, 1917, President Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war against Germany, saying that "The world must be made safe for democracy."

Already the country had been preparing, including several mobilization actions on the UM campus. But one issue that hit both the UM and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and hit them hard, was the issue of loyalty. At the UM, the German department was suspect.

At a farewell meeting for recruits at Hill Auditorium on September 4, 1917, responding for the draftees was Fred Wahr, instructor in the German department, and a member of an old Ann Arbor German family.

He left no doubt where he stood:

"In justice to our great cause and to ourselves who are now called into service, we demand that those seditious and treasonable utterances which now and then find their way about in our community be silenced, and that those making such statements, whoever they may be – we demand that they be treated with the contempt which they deserve. You are either for us or against us."

His words hit hard and had influence.

In October, 1917, an assistant professor in the German department was dismissed by the Board of Regents. However at the same time the Regents tabled a request from the National Security League for an official inquiry into the loyalty of *all* professors and University officials.

By spring, the Regents were petitioned to remove the study of German from the curriculum, which they declined to do. However, enrollment in all German courses plummeted from about 1,300 to only 150.

One professor, a German national, feeling under suspicion by his colleagues, asked for a leave for the duration of the war, and it was granted "indefinitely". When he asked for reinstatement in 1919, he was turned down. Bitterly, he returned to Germany.

The Regents also notified three other non-tenured German faculty members that they would not be reappointed. But, in balance, two German citizens on the faculty were stoutly defended.

In Chicago, the issue of loyalty was raised regarding some of the orchestra members. Flutist Albert Quensel and premier cellist Bruno Steindel, who rode the "L" together to rehearsal each day, speaking German and reading the *Deutsche Abenpost*, were investigated by authorities.

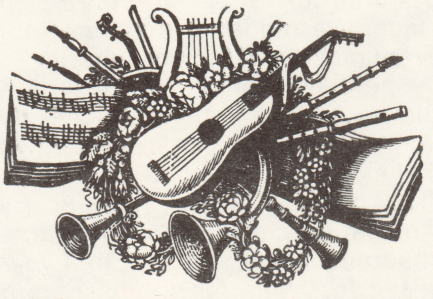
Trombonist Stange held no political views and his American citizenship spoke for itself, in spite of the fact that all three of his brothers were killed on the Russian front in the early days of the war as soldiers in the German army.

The issue reached such a pitch that, in unprecedented action, Charles Hamill, first vice-president of the Orchestral Association, after the intermission of the programs on April 5 and 6, 1918, addressed the audience at Chicago's Orchestra Hall regarding the loyalty of the members of the CSO.

In reply to newspaper charges that some of the men were out-and-out pro-German in their war views, Mr. Hamill declared that the entire orchestra was faithful to America, from the conductor to the drummer.

In support of his statement he read a resolution adopted at a recent meeting of the members of the orchestra resolving "that we pledge our moral and material support to the Government in its conduct of the war."

Then, in the summer, the issue resurfaced and hit a boiling point. Frederick Stock, conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, it was reported took out his first citizenship papers on his arrival in 1895 in America, but in consequence of his absorbing duties in connection with the orchestra, neglected to apply for second papers until 1916, when he found his first papers had lapsed and it was necessary to take out new ones.



Before his papers arrived, the United States had entered the war against Germany.

In order to relieve the trustees from possible embarassment, he decided to tender his resignation in a formal letter of August 17, 1918. In October, the Board of Trustees reluctantly accepted Stock's request to resign, but only until such time as he could get his citizenship papers in order.

At the same meeting, Bruno Steindel's resignation was accepted. Steindel had been a giant in his field, serving as first cellist for the Berlin Philharmonic in the 1880s, playing under Brahms, Tschaikowsky and Dvorak, and having been a CSO member for 27 years since its founding in 1891.

Nowhere is it reported that there was any pro-German sentiments in Steindel's views, and so the following year, 1919, the CSO trustees placed him on the pension roll.

In February, 1919, Stock's papers were all in order and he was reappointed conductor by a unanimous note of the trustees. Stock appeared on stage at the concert of Friday, February 28.

Cheers came from the galleries; the men in the orchestra gave him a prolonged fanfare while the vast audience rose to utter its gladness in shouts of applause and waving of handkerchiefs for their popular conductor.

When all was quiet, Stock thanked the people for the cordial support given to the orchestra. The concert closed with Stock's own work, entitled "March and Hymn to Democracy."

In spite of all the trauma, Stock never missed an Ann Arbor May Festival.

May 1, 1918 in Michigan and January, 1920 nationally, saw the beginning of Prohibition, but in spite of it, there was the frivolity of fraternities and sororities, dances and the like.

**The 1919-1920 Choral Union series of concerts featured the great Enrico Caruso. It was his only appearance in Ann Arbor.**

The local press reported that although Buffalo, Chicago and St. Louis would have to pay double what Ann Arbor paid for his concert, Caruso was still reportedly paid $13,250 here. Take that Ty Cobb!

The early 1920s witnessed the retirement of Albert Stanley and his being succeeded by the capable Earl Moore who died recently and has a building named for him.

Elsewhere, in 1925, Clarence Darrow defended John Scopes in the famous monkey trial in Tennessee, while the same year the U.S. Army was finding Brig. General Billy Mitchell guilty of insubordination for his vigor in proposing the establishment of a modern military air force.

And in May-June 1926 – here we go again – the U.S. Marines once again landed in Nicaragua, this time to maintain peace after the outbreak of hostilities between government and rebel forces. And, of course, the May Festival continued on strong footing. We come then to the big year of 1927.

The height of the Roarin' Twenties. Dempsey-Tunney and the Long Count. Babe Ruth and 60 home runs. The first transmission of a television picture. And the first all-talking motion picture, "The Jazz Singer," starring Al Jolson.

**In Ann Arbor, the May Festival was a rousing success; but buzzing through town, on the steps of Hill Auditorium and on the front pages of newspapers was the flight of Detroit-born St. Louis resident Charles Lindbergh, who arrived in Paris on the third night of the May Festival.**

By the end of the 1920s, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra had emerged as one of the premier orchestras in the world.

Perhaps fitting for trombonist Gustav Stange's 26th and final May Festival in 1929, the Festival Chorus sang Brahms' "A German Requiem."

Stange retired right after the 1929 May Festival. His son had married in mid-decade and now had two children, and his daughter had just married an immigrant like herself in 1928. In September 1929, she gave birth to a daughter.

The Stanges retired to a modest home in Marengo, Illinois, fifty miles west of Chicago, to fill the role of grandparents.

**Epilogue**

What I have attempted to do here is

to provide a backdrop of some of history's famous events and some of life's personal triumphs and tragedies, less we lose sight of the simple human dimension that surrounds an event like the May Festival.

I have already mentioned that Stange's brothers all died in combat in the German army in the early days of World War I. An old woman, his only sister, who was younger than he, died during World War II. War completely severed Stange's link to his family and native country.

In March, 1935, while returning from a Florida vacation, Gustav Stange apparently had a heart attack at the wheel of his car, near Memphis, Tennessee, and he and his wife were killed in a single-car crash.

Two months later, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra played its last May Festival, ending 31 consecutive May Festivals. The following February, Stange's youngest grandson was born, one he never knew.

However, after a gap of 57 years, from 1929 to 1986, a Stange family member will appear on the stage of Hill Auditorium, not as an obsure trombonist, but rather as an obscure bass in the Festival Chorus.

So, tonight, when the Director of the Ann Arbor Public Library sings Verdi's "Requiem" with the Festival Chorus, it will not only be because I love this beautiful piece of music, but it will also be to pay honor to a grandfather I never knew.

In a small way, like him, I want to affirm life by trying to make it a little more beautiful through music.

## SHE SANG IN FIRST CHILDREN'S CHORUS

WCHS member Dorothy Mummery remembers singing in the first (and second) children's chorus at the May Festival in 1913 in the brand new Hill Auditorium.

Albert Stanley conducted the children in singing "The Walrus and The Carpenter." She thinks there were children from every school in town.

"We gave (Conductors) Stock and Stanley and (Soloist) Madame Schumann-Heink bouquets of lilacs. We made boutonnieres for every member of the orchestra."

She recalled going to Miss Dicken's room at W. S. Perry School on a Saturday morning to make them.

Kenneth Fischer, University Musical Society director, said a children's choir will sing this year at the festival after an absence of some years. An Ann Arbor boy choir has been selected.

### HOW TO JOIN WCHS

Send name, address and phone number with check or money order payable to Washtenaw County Historical Society to Pauline Walters, 2200 Fuller Road, B-1202, Ann Arbor, MI 48105. Information: 663-2379 evenings/weekends.

Annual dues are $8 for individuals, $15 a couple. Senior individual (60) dues are $6, or $11 a senior couple. Sustaining dues are $50, commercial $25 and student $2. Only one of a couple need be 60 to qualify for senior membership status.

## 'WHAT IS IT' GAME AVAILABLE TO SCHOOLS

WCHS offers a traveling exhibit of small artifacts set up as a humorous "What is it" game for children to schools and another for adults.

They are available for classes and meetings, subject to time and volunteer availability. For information call Karen O'Neal, chairwoman, 665-2242.

## NEW GOWNS A MUST FOR MAY FESTIVAL

A woman in the audience said her mother told her the May Festival used to be the biggest event in Ann Arbor. Many persons came on interurban trains which parked on the tracks along State Street by an old concrete retaining wall.

Some professor's families hired dressmakers to come to their homes and sew for weeks on gowns to wear. "You didn't go in jeans," she noted.

### 'RURAL PERQUISITES'

**"What are the speed regulations in this village?" asked the motorist of a small boy by the wayside.**

**"Cough up ten dollars everytime you meet a man with a tin star on his chest," replied the truthful lad.**

From Ford Smiles: All The Best Current Jokes About A Rattling Good Car, by Carleton B. Case, Shrewesbury Publishing Company, Chicago 1917.

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Published September-May except December and January.

**WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**2:00 P.M. Sunday**
**March 20, 1988**

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